

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

For Immediate Release

52 ARTISTS: REVISITING A FEMINIST MILESTONE June 4, 2022 to January 8, 2023

52 Artists: Revisiting a Feminist Milestone celebrates the fifty-first anniversary of the historic exhibition *Twenty Six Contemporary Women Artists*, curated by Lucy R. Lippard and presented at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in 1971. *52 Artists* will showcase work by the artists included in the original 1971 exhibition, alongside a new roster of twenty-six female identifying or nonbinary emerging artists, tracking the evolution of feminist art practices over the past five decades. *52 Artists* will encompass the entirety of the Museum (approx. 8,000 sq. ft)—the first exhibition to do so since The Aldrich's new building was inaugurated in 2004. The exhibition is organized by The Aldrich's Senior Curator Amy Smith-Stewart and independent curator Alexandra Schwartz, with The Aldrich's Curatorial Assistant Caitlin Monachino. *52 Artists: Revisiting a Feminist Milestone* will be on view at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum from June 4, 2022 to January 8, 2023.



Merrill Wagner, *Untitled* (left), 1969, and *Inlet* (right), 2010. Courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner, New York.

The artists whose work was presented in the original 1971 exhibition are: Cecile Abish (b. 1926), Alice Aycock (b. 1946), Cynthia Carlson (b. 1942), Sue Ann Childress* (b. 1947), Glorianna Davenport* (b. 1944), Susan Hall (b. 1943), Mary Heilmann (b. 1940), Audrey Hemenway (1930-2008), Laurace James (b. 1936), Mablen Jones (b. 1943), Carol Kinne (1942-2016), Christine Kozlov (1945-2005), Brenda Miller (b. 1941), Mary Miss (b. 1944), Dona Nelson (b. 1947), Louise Parks* (b. 1944), Shirley Pettibone (1936-2011), Howardena Pindell (b. 1943), Adrian Piper (b. 1948), Sylvia Plimack Mangold (b. 1938), Reeva Potoff (b. 1941), Paula Tavins (1936-2019), Merrill Wagner (b. 1935), Grace Bakst Wapner (b. 1934), Jackie Winsor (b. 1941), Barbara Zucker (b. 1940). All but three of the original twenty-six artists will have work included in *52 Artists*. (*These artists are not participating.)

The list of the twenty-six emerging artists will be announced in September 2021. These artists were born in or after 1980, live and work in New York City, and will have not had a major solo museum exhibition in the United States as of March 1, 2022.

On view at The Aldrich from April 18 to June 13, 1971, *Twenty Six Contemporary Women Artists* was organized by writer, art critic, activist, and curator Lucy R. Lippard. She viewed curating this landmark exhibition as an activist gesture. In its catalogue, she states: "I took on this show because I knew there were many women artists whose work was as good or better than that currently being shown, but who, because of the prevailing discriminatory policies of most galleries and museums, can rarely get anyone to visit their studios or take them as seriously as their male counterparts." With this exhibition, Lippard arguably founded feminist curatorial practice in this country.

52 Artists will survey this landmark exhibition, including works of art from the original exhibition and recreations of some of the more ephemeral pieces, and, if neither are available, related works from the same period. The exhibition will also include recent works by many of the original artists showing how their practices have evolved over the past fifty years. *52 Artists* will also debut a commensurate group of twenty-six emerging artists living and working in New York City. By showing the original group alongside emerging artists of today, the exhibition will testify both to the historic impact of Lippard's milestone exhibition and to the influence of her work, and the work of the original twenty-six artists she presented at The Aldrich, on a new generation of feminist artists.

258 Main Street Ridgefield, CT 06877
203.438.4519
www.thealdrich.org



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Lippard's original 1971 exhibition at The Aldrich was one of the first institutional responses to the issue of women artists' invisibility in museums and galleries. More specifically, the show offered a rejoinder to the protests by the Ad Hoc Women Artists Committee (founded by Poppy Johnson, Brenda Miller, Faith Ringgold, and Lucy Lippard) over the absence of women in the Whitney Museum of American Art's 1970 *Sculpture Annual*. *Twenty Six Contemporary Women Artists* opened the floodgates to a host of other feminist exhibitions throughout the 1970s, signaling Lippard's emergence as a visionary feminist curator and critic and marking the debut of many groundbreaking artists. *52 Artists* not only celebrates this radical exhibition but underscores its ongoing influence on future generations of artists.

The original 1971 catalogue was designed by architect and scholar Susana Torre. A new, 200-page softcover book designed by Gretchen Kraus, The Aldrich's Design Director, will accompany the exhibition. This significant catalogue will include new essays by Lippard, Smith-Stewart, and Schwartz, as well as rare historical documentation of the original exhibition, images, installation views, and checklists from both the 1971 and 2022 shows.

For press inquiries, please contact Emily Devoe at 203.438.4519, extension 140, or edevoe@thealdrich.org

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